What Is Claimed Is:

1. A method of treatment, comprising administering 4-hydroxy tamoxifen to a patient having breast cancer.

2. A method according to claim 1, wherein said 4-hydroxy tamoxifen is administered percutaneously.

3. A method according to claim 2, wherein said 4-hydroxy tamoxifen is in a vehicle containing a penetration enhancer.

4. A method according to claim 2, wherein about 0.25 to 2.0 mg/breast of said 4-hydroxy tamoxifen is administered to said patient per day.

5. A method according to claim 2, wherein about 0.5 to 1.0 mg/breast of said 4-hydroxy tamoxifen is administered to said patient per day.

6. A method according to claim 2, wherein about 0.25 mg/breast of said 4-hydroxy tamoxifen is administered to said patient per day.

7. A method according to claim 2, wherein about 0.5 mg/breast of said 4-hydroxy tamoxifen is administered to said patient per day.

8. A method according to claim 2, wherein about 0.75 mg/breast of said 4-hydroxy tamoxifen is administered to said patient per day.

9. A method according to claim 2, wherein about 1.0 mg/breast of said 4-hydroxy tamoxifen is administered to said patient per day.

10. A method according to claim 2, wherein said 4-hydroxy tamoxifen is formulated in a hydroalcoholic gel.

11. A method according to claim 10, wherein said hydroalcoholic gel comprises ethyl alcohol, isopropyl myristate, and hydroxypropylcellulose.

12. A method according to claim 2, wherein said 4-hydroxy tamoxifen is formulated in an alcoholic solution.

13. A method according to claim 1, wherein said breast cancer is estrogen receptor-positive.

14. A method of preventing breast cancer, comprising administering 4-hydroxy tamoxifen to a patient at risk for developing breast cancer.

15. A method according to claim 14, wherein said 4-hydroxy tamoxifen is administered percutaneously.

16. A method according to claim 15, wherein said 4-hydroxy tamoxifen is in a vehicle containing a penetration enhancer.

17. A method according to claim 15, wherein about 0.25 to 2.0 mg/breast of said 4-hydroxy tamoxifen is administered to said patient per day.

18. A method according to claim 15, wherein about 0.5 to 1.0 mg/breast of said 4-hydroxy tamoxifen is administered to said patient per day.

19. A method according to claim 15, wherein about 0.25 mg/breast of said 4-hydroxy tamoxifen is administered to said patient per day.

20. A method according to claim 15, wherein about 0.5 mg/breast of said 4-hydroxy tamoxifen is administered to said patient per day.

21. A method according to claim 15, wherein about 0.75 mg/breast of said 4-hydroxy tamoxifen is administered to said patient per day.

22. A method according to claim 15, wherein about 1.0 mg/breast of said 4-hydroxy tamoxifen is administered to said patient per day.

23. A method according to claim 15, wherein said 4-hydroxy tamoxifen is formulated in a hydroalcoholic gel.

24. A method according to claim 23, wherein said hydroalcoholic gel comprises ethyl alcohol, isopropyl myristate, and hydroxypropylcellulose.

25. A method according to claim 15, wherein said 4-hydroxy tamoxifen is formulated in an alcoholic solution.

26. A pharmaceutical composition for percutaneous administration comprising 4-hydroxy tamoxifen and at least one penetration enhancer.

27. A composition according to claim 26, wherein said pharmaceutical composition is a hydroalcoholic gel, a hydroalcoholic solution, a patch, an ointment, a cream, an emulsion (lotion), a powder or an oil.

28. A composition according to claim 26, wherein the pharmaceutical composition is a hydroalcoholic composition containing a penetration enhancer, an aqueous vehicle, an alcoholic vehicle and a gelling agent.

29. A composition according to claim 28, wherein the pharmaceutical composition comprises also a neutralizing agent.

30. A composition according to claim 28, wherein the penetration enhancer comprises at least a fatty acid ester.

31. A composition according to claim 28, wherein said pharmaceutical composition comprises:

a) about 0.01 % to 0.1 % by weight of 4-hydroxy tamoxifen,

b) about 0.5 % to 2 % by weight of isopropyl myristate,

c) about 65% to 75% by weight of alcohol,

d) about 20% to 35% by weight of aqueous vehicule,

e) about 1.0% to 5% by weight of gelling agent,

wherein the percentage of components are weight to weight of the composition.

32. A composition according to claim 31, wherein the 4-hydroxy tamoxifen constitutes about 0.01%, 0.02%, 0.03%, 0.04%, 0.05%, 0.06%, 0.07%, 0.08%, 0.09%, or 0.10% by weight of the composition.

33. A composition according to claim 31, wherein the isopropyl myristate constitutes about 0.5%, 0.6%, 0.7%, 0.8%, 0.9%, 1.0%, 1.1%, 1.2%, 1.3%, 1.4%, 1.5%, 1.6%, 1.7%, 1.8%, 1.9% or 2.0% by weight of the composition.

34. A composition according to claim 31, wherein the alcohol is ethanol or isopropanol, and constitutes about 65% to 75% by weight of the composition.

35. A composition according to claim 31, wherein the aqueous vehicle is a phosphate buffered solution, and constitutes about 25% to 35% by weight of the composition.

36. A composition according to claim 31, wherein the gelling agent is a polyacrylic acid, hydroxypropylcellulose or other cellulose derivative, and constitutes about 1.0% to 5% by weight of the composition.

37. A composition according to claim 31, which further comprises a neutralizing agent selected in the group consisting of sodium hydroxide, ammonium hydroxide, potassium hydroxide, arginine, aminomethylpropanol and tromethamine, which neutralizing agent constitutes about 0.1% to 5% by weight of the composition.

38. A composition according to claim 31, which is packaged in a unit dose packet or in a multiple dose container with a metered pump.